

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07
COME-00 TRSE-00 AID-05 /066 W
-----240228Z 107679 /60

R 231123Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5851

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 9356

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS: PINT GH
SUB: OKAI AND BEAUSOLEIL DUNNED FOR TAX EVASION

1. A SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL (SMC) DECREE PUBLISHED DEC 22 AND REPORTED IN LOCAL PRESS NEXT DAY ORDERED SIX PEOPLE ACCUSED OF TAX EVASION BY THE APPIAH COMMITTEE REPORT TO PAY A TOTAL OF CEDIS 910,580 (\$791,809 AT OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATE) TO THE GOG IN IMPORT DUTIES, PURCHASE TAXES AND PENALTIES FOR ILLEGALLY IMPORTING MERCEDES-BENZ' AND A PORSCHE THROUGH THE BRISCOE COMPANY.

2. FORMER CHIEF OF DEFENSE STAFF OKAI OWES THE STATE CEDIS 147,927 (\$128,632 AT OFFICIALS AND ABOUT \$29,585 AT OPEN MARKET RATE); FORMER AIR FORCE COMMANDER BEAUSOLEIL, CEDIS 199,781 (\$173,723 AT OFFICIAL AND ABOUT \$39,956 AT OPEN MARKET RATE). OTHER LARGE SUMS ARE OWNED BY R.S. AMEGASHIE, AN ACCRA ACCOUNTANT; AND E.K. AKYEADJAMSON, BEN K. ADDAE, AND J.B. QUASHIE-IDUN, ALL ACCRA LAWYERS. ACCORDING TO DECREE, THE SIX CARS IMPORTED BY THE ABOVE "SHALL BE DISPOSED OF IN SUCH A MANNER AS THE SMC MAY THINK FIT."

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH PRESS STATES DECREE PUBLISHED DEC 22, SISTER OF QUASHIE-IDUN TOLD DCM ON DEC 22 THAT DECREE WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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ISSUED AND DATED DEC 17. SHE (MRS. FRANCES ADEMOLA) DESCRIBED FINES AND PENALTIES LEVIED AGAINST LAWYERS AS ATTEMPT BY JOE APPIAH TO REMOVE ANY POSSIBLE CANDIDATES FOR PRIME MINISTER POSITION IN A UNION GOVERNMENT. SHE CALLED APPIAH "A VICIOUS PERSON" AND NOTED THAT DECREE WAS PARTICULARLY INSULTING TO THE LAWYERS AND TO THE RULE OF LAW SINCE IT STATED THAT

DECREE SHOULD BE REGARDED AS DECISION OF THE HIGH COURT AND IS
NOT, THEREFORE, SUBJECT TO APPEAL. EMBASSY HAD THOUGHT
ACHEAMPONG WOULD LET WELL ENOUGH ALONE AFTER OUSTING
OKAI AND BEAUSOLEIL AND THEN RELEEEASING THE APPIAH
REPORT ON BRISCOE. EVEN AT OPEN MARKET EXCHANGE RATES, THE
PAYMENTS DEMANDED ARE STAGGERING AND, WE GUESS, BEYOND
THE IMMEDIATE ABILITY OF THESE MEN TO PAY.
PRESUMABLY PAYMENTS WILL BE SPREAD OUT BUT IN ANY CASE
DECREE CAN ONLY BE A SEVERE AND UNEXPECTED BLOW TO THOSE INVOLVED.
SMITH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: IMPORTS, TAX COLLECTIONS, AUTOMOBILES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ACCRA09356
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760471-0931
From: ACCRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761215/aaaaamji.tel
Line Count: 71
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUN 2004 by ellisoob>; APPROVED <14 OCT 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OKAI AND BEAUSOLEIL DUNNED FOR TAX EVASION
TAGS: PINT, GH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006